

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Tour of Vancouver Opera's groundbreaking opera about bullying begins
STICKBOY
will tour B.C. with more than
50 performances in schools and other community venues

Vancouver, BC ~ Stickboy, Vancouver Opera's groundbreaking new work about bullying, will begin its much-anticipated tour this month. Composed by **Neil Weisensel** to a libretto by world-renowned spoken-word artist **Shane Koyczan** and adaptation and stage direction by **Rachel Peake**, this autobiographical, courageous and visually stunning opera explores the inner life of a young boy transformed by bullying.

The 60-minute touring production, created especially for high school students, is adapted from VO's mainstage production. The set has been re-scaled for touring and three large video screens will recreate the innovative projections first seen during the 2014 world premiere at the Vancouver Playhouse Theatre.

The entire production, complete with five cast members, a pianist and a stage manager will give 56 performances at schools and other venues over the 10-week tour. The **Stickboy** tour is part of the **Vancouver Opera In Schools** program, now celebrating its 44th year.

There will be one public performance of **Stickboy**:

Saturday, January 30th, 2016
The Surrey Arts Centre
Tickets: \$27.95 (\$17.95 for students/seniors)
Surrey Arts Centre Box Office: 604-501-5566
Tickets: <http://www.surrey.ca/culture-recreation/18621.aspx>

The story, in brief

On the playground, in school hallways, and most profoundly in his own mind, an overweight boy is shunned, bullied, and cruelly provoked. Supported by the love of his grandmother, he finds courage through his vivid imagination, but that courage mutates, expressing itself with the violence that he himself has endured. Scarred and wary, the boy survives to face an uncertain future.

Bravely autobiographical, beautifully poetic, visually innovative and musically memorable, **Stickboy**

confronts a society struggling with its own fear and insecurity – a society that seeks conformity and uniformity at the expense of those who are different.

Cast and Creative Team

Composer	Neil Weisensel
Librettist	Shane Koyczan
Adaptor/Stage Director	Rachel Peake
Music Director	Kinza Tyrrell
Boy - Person 1	Sunny Shams
Grandma, Teacher, Student - Person 2	Allyson Hop
Old Man, Student, Principal, Halian	Aaron Durand †
Grandfather, Gym Teacher - Person 3	
Student, Secretary, Crystal, Alyssa, Valedictorian - Person 4	Heather Molloy
Chris, Janitor, Jeff, Dick - Person 5	DJ Calhoun
VOIS Pianist	Kimberley-Ann Bartczak *
Stage Manager	Melania Radelicki
<i>Understudies</i>	
Boy - Person 1	Spencer Britten
Grandma, Teacher, Student - Person 2	Moriah Wax
Old Man, Student, Principal, Halian	Scott Brooks
Grandfather, Gym Teacher - Person 3	
Student, Secretary, Crystal, Alyssa, Valedictorian - Person 4	Stephanie Nakagawa
Chris, Janitor, Jeff, Dick - Person 5	Kyle Lehmann

* Member of VO's Yulanda M. Faris Young Artists Program

† Yulanda M. Faris Young Artists Program Alumnus

About Vancouver Opera In Schools

Vancouver Opera In Schools is one of the largest opera touring programs of its kind in Canada. Since 1972, VOIS has maintained a tradition of professional opera performances in schools throughout British Columbia.

Each season, VOIS introduces the power and beauty of opera to children and their families in schools and community venues across BC. These fully staged operas are performed by an energetic cast of professional singers with full sets, costumes and piano accompaniment.

The Vancouver Opera In Schools tour of **Stickboy** is made possible thanks to extraordinary support from **The Province of British Columbia**, as well as through significant support from:

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The Manitoba Arts Council
The City of Vancouver
The City of Surrey

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The CKNW Orphans' Fund
The Leon and Thea Koerner Foundation
Diamond Foundation
SOCAN Foundation
Beech Foundation
The Da Capo Fund
The Edith Lando Charitable Foundation
Hamber Foundation
The Kinder Morgan Foundation
The McGrane - Pearson Endowment Fund
The McLean Foundation

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Individuals:

Martha Lou Henley, C.M.
Lis & Bruce Welch
Dr. Virginia Evans
Yuri Fulmer, OBC
Susan Knott - Official VOIS Stickboy Tour Backer
Dr. Barry & Mrs. Ronnie Tessler

And everyone who contributed to VO's 2015 FundRazr campaign



news 2015 – 2016 Season **release**

VO's 2015-2016 Season is generously sponsored by Goldcorp.